3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
FE11 Tallensi FE11

577 765 relatives at home decide not to wait for them are the exceptions that prove the rule. In a few cases they are men who have struck root in their new environment after many years of living there and find it difficult to get away. Sometimes they find it easier to procrastinate because they originally left home through a quarrel with the deceased parent. But generally they tarry because the deceased is a proxy parent or because they have older brothers at home who will conduct the funeral. Later, perhaps, when the mantle of the lineage headship falls on their shoulders they will return, like Pal and Dema, to take over and end their lives in the ancestral home. It is a feature of Tale custom that natural human weaknesses are not unduly penalized by public opinion. As long as he lives a man can always try to make good his derelictions of filial duty. It lies between him and his ancestors. The community is neutral.

577 765 593 At funeral ceremonies of old people one also sees that filial piety includes pride in one's parents. The *koordaana*, owner of the funeral or chief mourner (that is, the deceased's oldest son), and his brothers strain their resources to the utmost to provide a lavish funeral. It is not uncommon for nearly the whole harvest of a household to be consumed in making the beer and providing the cooked food required. In addition, animals must be slaughtered in honour of the dead. A poor man may be able to give his father only a couple of sheep or goats which he has had to borrow for the purpose. On the other hand, when Doohraan, the head of Siiyɛŋ biis of Tongo, died, rich in years and in honour, his sons slaughtered a cow, a donkey, and about a dozen small stock for his spirit; and Sayawuob postponed his mother's funeral for two years so that he should be able to give her a cow. At a big funeral, when the war parade (*dee*) and the whole concourse of clansfolk, kinsfolk, neighbours, and friends of the dead stand milling at the gateway, the oldest son climbs on to the wall to address the crowd. Wearing [242] his ceremonial plumed helmet of straw, with a large red cock in his hand, he looks down haughtily upon the crowd and delivers his harangue. ●[537] His speech, spun out with all the tricks of rhetoric in the Tale repertoire, is proud almost to the point of arrogance. He is relating the great deeds of his dead father or mother. They may seem trivial, sometimes, to the cold-blooded ethnographer—so and so borrowed five cows and paid them back in two years; so and so was a redoubtable farmer who in one year sold enough grain to buy three cows; another man boldly carried off his wife from under the noses of Mamprusi who had seized her; and this old woman was a potteress who by her own efforts earned the money to buy two cows, and in addition had been faithful to her first and only husband until his death. But it is not the substance so much as the occasion of these funeral panegyrics that matter to the Tallensi. At the end of his speech the son beats the cock (or if he is a rich man it may be a goat) to death on the wall and flings it to the crowd with a challenge that any person who can claim equal achievements should take it. But